

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canada's Largest Affordable Housing Project Breaks Ground on Building

Union Community Housing at Country Squire marks the first phase of BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region development

Waterloo, ON — June 24, 2026

On Wednesday, BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region celebrated the start of construction on Union Community Housing at Country Squire, the first residential building to move forward within what is planned to become the largest affordable housing project in Canada to date.

Developed under the leadership of Maxwell Building Consultants and owned and operated by Union Community Housing, the building will provide 85 affordable rental homes and marks the first phase of a broader vision to create a complete mixed-income community on the 25-acre University Avenue East property donated by the City of Waterloo.

Union Community Housing at Country Squire will include a mix of studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments designed to meet the needs of individuals, couples and families. As a not-for-profit housing provider, Union Community Housing will ensure the homes remain permanently affordable, creating lasting opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.

Breaking ground at 2025 University Avenue East also marks a significant milestone for BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region. The community-led initiative aims to deliver 10,000 permanently affordable homes across Waterloo Region through partnerships between the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

"When people say the housing crisis is too complex or too difficult to solve, today's groundbreaking offers a different answer," said Philip Mills, Chief Executive Officer of BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region and Habitat for Humanity Waterloo Region. "Communities do not have to accept the status quo. When municipalities, non-profit organizations, builders and community partners work together with a shared purpose, we can create housing at a scale that matches the challenge before us. Union Community Housing at Country Squire is the first building, but it represents something much larger, a new way of delivering permanently affordable housing for Waterloo Region."

"Union Community Housing was created to respond to a real need in our community," said Sean Campbell, Executive Director of Union Community Housing. "Today, we break ground on 85 homes that will remain affordable for the long term. We're proud to do this alongside the City of Waterloo, BUILD NOW and our development partners."

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The University Avenue East development demonstrates the collaborative approach at the heart of BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region. The project was made possible through the City of Waterloo's land donation, enabled by support from the federal Housing Accelerator Fund. By bringing together government, community organizations, housing providers and private-sector partners, the initiative is creating a new model for delivering the housing the region needs at the scale and speed it requires.

Once complete, the University Avenue East community will include a mix of ownership and rental housing, helping more people access attainable, affordable homes while creating a vibrant and inclusive neighbourhood.

"Today's groundbreaking demonstrates the power of partnership in action," said Dorothy McCabe, Mayor of Waterloo. "Working together across sectors, we are creating real, lasting housing solutions for our community. The City of Waterloo is thrilled to support this effort by contributing land. Together, we're advancing a vision that will provide more people find a safe, affordable place to call home."

"By creating new affordable housing units that will remain affordable over the long term, we are helping address immediate housing needs in Waterloo while also building a permanent inventory of affordable homes that will benefit residents for generations to come," said Bardish Chagger, M.P. for Waterloo. "This investment strengthens our community, supports housing stability and ensures that more people have access to safe, secure and affordable places to live."

Today's groundbreaking represents more than the start of a building. It marks the beginning of a community and demonstrates what is possible when a region comes together to address one of its most pressing challenges.

About BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region

BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region is a collaborative housing initiative that brings together the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to create 10,000 permanently affordable homes across Waterloo Region. Through innovative partnerships, donated land, streamlined approvals and community investment, BUILD NOW: Waterloo Region is working to deliver housing at the scale and speed needed to address the region's housing crisis.

About Union Community Housing

Union Community Housing is a Waterloo Region-based not-for-profit organization that develops and operates affordable housing. Its mission is to create and preserve affordable rental homes that support low- and moderate-income households and remain affordable for generations to come.

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